



Call for Papers (Spring Issue, March 2026)

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Urban Civilisations: Critical Perspectives on the Past and Present

The concept of ‘civilisation’ shares its etymological root with the *civitas* (city), creating an enduring historical link between urbanisation and the perceived progress of human society. However, this association is fraught with tension. Historically, the narrative of ‘civilisation’ has been used to justify colonial expansion, enforce social stratification, and create binary oppositions between the ‘civilised’ centre and the ‘barbarian’ periphery.

This issue seeks to deconstruct and critically examine the term ‘urban civilisations.’ We invite scholars from history, sociology, economics, geography, urban studies, culture studies, philosophy, environmental studies, amongst others, to interrogate how the city functions as a crucible for defining, contesting, and reshaping what it means to be ‘civilised.’ We encourage submissions that move beyond linear narratives of progress to explore the friction, exclusion, and adaptation inherent in the urban experience. We welcome theoretical and empirical papers addressing the following indicative themes:

- **The Emergence of Urban Centres:** Re-evaluating the genesis of early cities. How did the first urban aggregations define themselves against non-urban others?
- **Urban History and Memory:** How historical urban narratives are constructed, and are histories erased in the pursuit of a unified ‘civilised’ identity?
- **Negotiating Urban and Rural Spaces:** Analysing the porous borders between the city and the country. We seek papers on migration, food systems, and the socio-economic symbiosis (or parasitism) between urban cores and rural hinterlands.
- **Environment and the City:** The urban footprint in the Anthropocene. How does the demand for ‘civilised’ living (sanitation, energy, consumption) impact the biosphere? Can urban spaces ever be truly sustainable?
- **Transport and Mobility:** Mobility as a marker of modernity. How do transportation networks dictate social inclusion, economic access, and the rhythm of urban life?
- **Urban Civilisations: Present and Future:** From ‘Smart Cities’ to informal settlements. How is the future of civilisation being codified by technology, surveillance, and density?

An abstract in the range of **250-300 words** should be submitted along with the full manuscript (**6,000–8,000 words** for **research articles**; **3,000-5,000 words** for **research essays**). The submissions should be in compliance with the Transarea Journal’s **Style Guide**. The link to access the same is available on the Submissions page of the Transarea Journal’s website: <https://transareajournal.org/en/submission>. The research articles will be reviewed internally by the editorial board before being sent for a blind review. A final decision on publishing the article/essay will be taken by the Editorial Board based on the suggestions of the reviewers. The decision of the Editorial Board will be final.

Last Date for Submission: March 15, 2026

Email your submissions to: submissions.transarea@somaiya.edu (Please mention the submission type in the subject line: **Research Article** or **Research Essay** or **Book Review**)

Please read the submission guidelines before submitting your manuscripts:

<https://transareajournal.org/en/submission>